

In Passing contd.

Arctic Station at Godhavn

✓ Recently the University of Copenhagen has published a leaflet (in English and Danish), called "ARCTIC STATION - Research Station of Natural History in Greenland". The leaflet contains a lot of valuable information. The headlines of its sections are: The purpose of the Arctic Station at Godhavn - The physical surroundings - The history of the station - Traffic connections - The station - Qeqertarssuaq/Godhavn - Stay at the Arctic Station - Management of the station - Addresses.

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Interested parties may obtain the leaflet by approaching the station's secretariat at the Botanical Central Institute, 83 Sølv-
gade, DK-1307 Copenhagen K.

The purpose of the Arctic Station at Godhavn

The Arctic Station is the setting for research and teaching at university level in botany, zoology, geography and geology. All-year round research has high priority, and the scientific leader lives at the station throughout the year so that conditions in winter may be studied as well. Guest scientists are welcome at any time through the year.

The Arctic Station is a base for scientific expeditions in the Disko Bugt area especially in summer, and the cutter "Porsild" serves both as a means of transportation and as a research tool. More advanced teaching for university students, the Greenlandic school authorities, university extramural courses and other is carried out during field courses in the summer. Research courses are held on specific subjects and with international participation.

An extensive library supports the research and teaching activities.

The physical surroundings

The Arctic Station is situated on the south coast of Disko at the outer part of Disko Bugt - in an area of West Greenland which shows the greatest variety in the natural environment.

The Climate: is arctic (see the diagram). From around December until May the sea around Godhavn is ice-covered, while the surrounding fjords are only navigable from June to November. Sudden changes in the weather are common, and it may snow even in the summer.

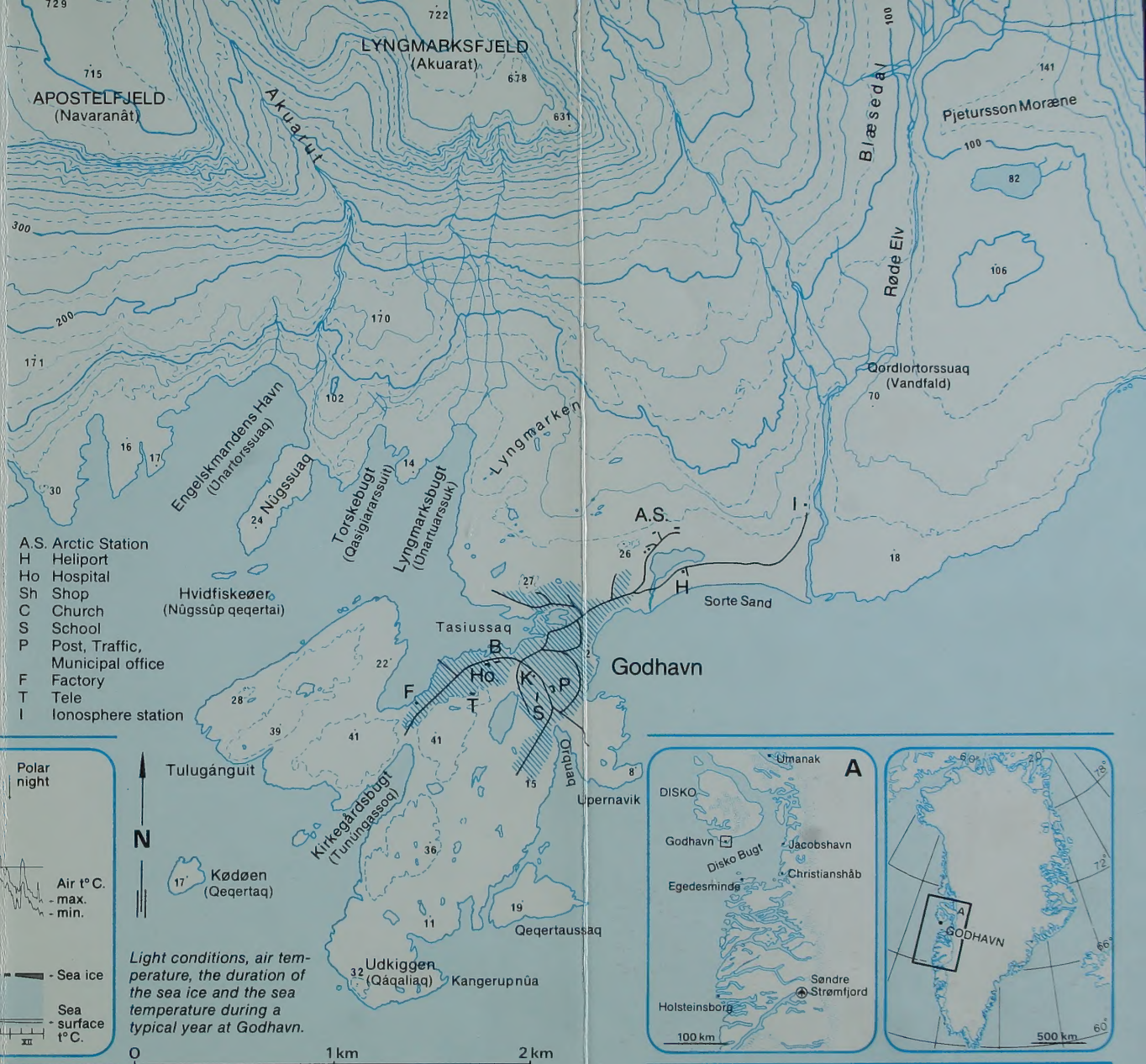
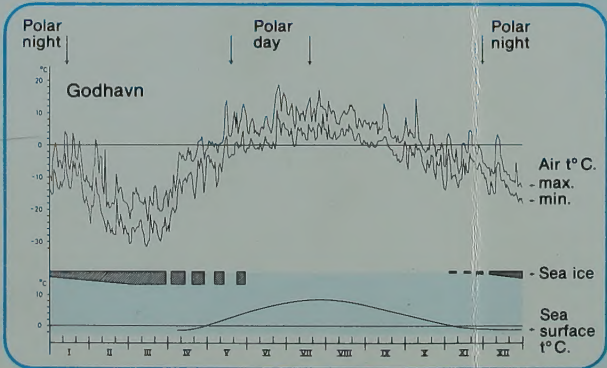
The south west coast of Disko in winter



Geology: The following pre-Quaternary formations are found in the area:
1) Precambrian bedrock (older than 1800 mill. years) occurs at Godhavn, in Disko Fjord and east and south of Disko Bugt.
2) Cretaceous and Tertiary shales and sandstones with coal layers outcrop on eastern Disko and Nügssuaq.
3) Tertiary breccias and extensive plateau-basalt lavas make up the dominant constituent of the Disko landscape.
The landscape was formed during the ice age. Even today glaciers are found and various types may be studied near the Arctic Station. Other active geomorphological processes which contribute to the development of the arctic landscape can be studied in the ice-free country and in the coastal zone.

Botany: The northern Disko has a high-arctic vegetation, whereas the southern part of the island with its slopes and valleys facing south in many places is characterized by low-arctic conditions and more plant species are found here than anywhere else in Greenland (approx. 250 of a total of 500 flowering plants). Around "warm" springs (with temperature between 0-18°C) many species have their northernmost occurrence. A particular wealth of species is found in Østerlien behind The Arctic Station itself. This is a protected nature reserve.

Zoology: Disko and the surrounding area have a rich bird life and several bird cliffs. In Disko Bugt there are rich fishing grounds and many species of sea mammals are caught. As the deep bay turns towards the Davis Strait, the possibilities of studies of marine biology are unique, while various assemblages of lower animals in the "warm" springs are of considerable interest. The land fauna is, however, rather poor in species.



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